



Southern Athletics League Division 1 – R3 – Chelmsford – 17th June 2017

Last Saturday, Chelmsford Athletic Club's combined Senior Men and Women's Team competed in the third match of this season's Southern Athletic League, against quality competition from Blackheath and Bromley, Marshal Milton Keynes and Woking.

On a scorching hot day the conditions were difficult for all athletes in all events, but particularly the middle and long distance runners. However, the rivalry between the clubs soon overcame the heat as all battled for every point. So close was the competition, as the day unfolded, that by late afternoon Blackheath & Bromley led but all four teams were within six points!

The final result however, with some excellent performances from Chelmsford in the closing stages, showed that Chelmsford came out on top with the final points being announced as: Chelmsford 213, Blackheath & Bromley 204, Marshall Milton Keynes 196 and Woking, who faded slightly towards the end, on 174.

Great performances from Chelmsford came early in the day with the Men's 100m. A junior debutant, Lewis Golding, set a personal best of 11.4 seconds. Lewis later went on, with a storming run, to anchor the 4x100m relay into second place and was awarded Man of the Match. This was a fantastic achievement for someone still in the under 17 age group.

One of the most exciting men's races of the day was the 800m. Both Chelmsford runners went to the front early, with Tom Keevil setting the pace and Grant Twist right on his shoulder. Coming down the finishing straight they were level, stride for stride and both crossed the line together. Even the judges could not separate the two and they were given the same time of 1:58.9. A double A and B string win.

If the 800m wasn't exciting enough then the 1500m was equally gripping. Again Chelmsford had two juniors running, in Charlie Everest (U20) and Elliot Cordery (U17). Charlie had the confidence to lead this race from the start against experienced senior competitors and he crossed the finish line first. Team mate and training partner Elliot Cordery (who is more used to longer distances) was only a step or two behind to take another double win.

In the 400m, a B string win from Darren Blackwell and a second place from Paul Owen in the A string scored heavily. It was pleasing to see Darren show significant speed having dropped to a shorter distance for this match.

Further successes came in the 400m and 110m Hurdles as decathletes Luke Keteleers and Mike Bartlett joined up with Rhys Collings to take fifteen of the sixteen points available! Rhys and Luke took a double (A and B string) win in the 400mH and Mike won the 110mH B string. Luke competed in both events and still managed a second place in the 110mH A string.

The Men's Steeplechase was easily won by Grant Twist who was using the event for practice after being selected for an upcoming national race. Grant cruised around and was supported by Ken Hoye in the B string. Ken himself managed to run both the Steeplechase and the 5000m on the day. This was an amazing achievement in itself considering the temperatures during mid-afternoon.



In the men's Field events Sergei Zotin cleared the "Chelmsford Gold Standard" of 1.95m in winning the High Jump. Sergei then teamed up with Jamie Allway for the Triple Jump and took second place, with Jamie first in the B string. This was after Jamie had previously totally dominated the Pole Vault with a massive win in the A string.

The men's Discus was yet another double win for Chelmsford. Kevin Wilson and Alex Reynolds did the honours. It was the same story again in the Hammer as Alex, this time partnered by Yasha Bobash took maximum points in the event. To complete the combination of Chelmsford throwers, Yasha and Kevin then went on to take a win and second place in the Shot. With only one point dropped from a possible twenty four it was a fantastic achievement from these three throwers.

For the ladies, Woman of the Match went to Shirley Quinn who is so valuable to the team in the Throws, not just as a coach but as an athlete. Shirley, as always, was supported by Rebecca Healy.

In the ladies sprints, it was Caroline Hill and Erin Milton-Branfoot who had to work so hard in the heat of the day. Caroline managed a win in the 400m but both, along with Emma Perks in the 200m, scored heavily in all events.

The women's 1500m was a great run from the Chelmsford duo of Megan Evans and Rebecca Luxton. They commanded the race from the front to take first and second overall, only 0.8 seconds apart, scoring maximum points from a win in both A and B strings.

Hurdler Claire Netley ran excellent races and piled on the points in both 100m and 400m Hurdles with second places in both the A string events. U17 Jess Whiley also ran well to take a second in the B 400m Hurdles race.

Mention must be made of Hayley Pegg and Tracy Minton who put in such an effort in the ladies distance events to score valuable points. Once again the heat made these events exhausting.

In the ladies Steeplechase, Hayley partnered young U20 age group Rachael Broome. It was possibly a late turning point in the match when Rachel, with an absolutely fantastic run, strode away from her more experienced seniors and won the A string with an impressive time of 7:37.7, as Hayley won the B race.

Mia Chantree and Jess Hopkins saw off the opposition in the Jumps with double wins in the Long Jump and a first and second place in the High Jump. Bearing in mind that these athletes were competing in senior competition for the first time, as U17's these results were incredible!

A win for Ellie Besford in the B Pole Vault added yet more valuable points. Ellie was paired with U20 Caitlin Boyle in the Pole Vault and Caitlin's clearance of 3m, on her return to action after a long lay-off, in the A string was very impressive.

As the last events of the day, the relays, approached Chelmsford were ahead, but only by a few points from Blackheath & Bromley. Any slip up could lose the match. The ladies were first to go in the 4x400m and finished second to chasing team but, significantly, it contained their advantage gained to one point. The men then ran and the result was the reverse of the ladies. Chelmsford first, Blackheath & Bromley second. The all important one point was retrieved and Chelmsford assured the overall match win!



This win means that the Chelmsford team move significantly up the league and, as current champions, could still top the table by the end of this season. The next Southern League match is at Chelmsford on 8th July.